

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 3, 2022

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

RE: Response to Hurricane Ian's Impact on Florida

Dear President Biden:

Thank you for your continued assistance as our home state of Florida prepared for, weathered, and is now recovering from the devastating Category 4 Hurricane Ian. It was one of the largest storms to ever hit the United States, and it has had a catastrophic impact. Over 2.6 million people lost power; severe flooding and record-high winds decimated homes, businesses, and infrastructure; and over 80 individuals in Florida tragically lost their lives, a number that is expected to climb as search and rescue efforts continue. 230 Members of Congress, including the entire Florida Democratic delegation, voted for a continuing resolution last week that included nearly \$19 billion in federal disaster assistance, which is now flowing without delay to our communities. This is a lifeline for our neighbors, but the road to recovery will be long and we will need your continued partnership.

We appreciate your Administration's whole-of-government response to this deadly disaster, including your Major Disaster Declarations for the state of Florida (DR-4673-FL) on September 29th and the Seminole Tribe (DR-4675) on September 30th. These declarations have unlocked federal disaster assistance through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Disaster Relief Fund (DRF), which will immediately supplement state, tribal, and local recovery efforts across the state, as well as provide funding for individuals in several of the hardest-hit counties. Additionally, Secretary Becerra issued a public health emergency declaration and a Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Section 1335 waiver on September 27th to help the state address the health impacts of Hurricane Ian and give providers more flexibility in meeting emergency health needs. Finally, the Small Business Administration (SBA) made a disaster declaration on September 29th, making several disaster-related loans available to our constituents.

As your partners in Congress, we were proud to vote for the Continuing Appropriations and Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act (H.R. 6833) on September 30th that you have signed into law. This legislation provided \$18.8 billion that can be immediately sent to our communities, as well as the survivors of other declared disasters such as Hurricane Fiona in Puerto Rico and the severe flooding and landslides in Alaska. This is in addition to the approximately \$10 billion that is already in the DRF from previous funding packages, which Florida can draw on as we respond to Hurricane Ian. Important to our neighbors across the state,

the legislation also included \$2 billion for the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR), which can go towards long-term housing, infrastructure, and economic recovery needs for areas impacted by a natural disaster in 2021 or 2022, including Hurricane Ian.

Every storm provides new information and urgency to inform rebuilding in ways that will reduce future losses of life and property. We can already see that the early adoption of resilience-based land use decisions and building codes helped reduce losses. It will be critical to apply the latest science, codes, and standards to decisions about how to rebuild, and to deploy funding quickly to accelerate mitigation and a resilient recovery from this storm.

We are thankful that you are coming to visit Florida on Wednesday to personally assess the damage done by Hurricane Ian. Over the next several weeks, we will continue to gather information from local, state, and federal partners and officials to ascertain the greatest needs in our communities. We know that your Administration will continue to coordinate with us once we have a fuller assessment of the damage, including the likelihood that the state will need additional funding for recovery costs in the future.

Thank you again for your strong support to Florida as we recover and rebuild from Hurricane Ian.

Sincerely,



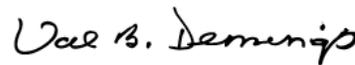
Kathy Castor
Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



Val Demings
Member of Congress



Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
Member of Congress



Al Lawson
Member of Congress



Stephanie Murphy
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Lois Frankel
Member of Congress



Darren Soto
Member of Congress

CC: Shalanda Young
Director, Office of Management and Budget